

Converting your Academic CV into a Resume

How to create a targeted resume for industry positions

By Hana El Kaissi and Lucky Kalsi

It is well known that a strong curriculum vitae is crucial when applying to positions within academia. The same holds true if you are applying for industry positions. However, an application for those types of roles will require you to submit a concise resume instead of a lengthy CV. Many graduate students may be inclined to include all of their accumulated academic experience on the resume with the hope that the hiring manager will be able to assess what is most relevant to the job posting. In this case, however, more is not always better, as employers prefer resumes that outline the skills and experiences relevant to the position, presented in a succinct and tailored format. Given the

years of experience gained throughout your academic career, it can sometimes be an overwhelming task to condense the information from your CV into a resume that is often only two pages long. The following recommendations are designed to help guide you through the process of converting your CV into a targeted resume.

The first step involves reviewing the job posting to assess and identify the key skills, attributes, experience, and education required for the specific role you are interested in. Once you've made a list of these qualities, analyze all experiences and information listed in your CV and select those that are most relevant and a good fit for the requirements of the position. As you

go through the process of selecting experiences from your CV, you may find it necessary to limit or exclude some of your most valued achievements (e.g. publications, awards, etc.). It is important to remember that you are working with very limited space in a resume and its purpose is to capture the employer's attention by presenting only the information that is most relevant to the position. Once you've completed this analysis of your CV, you can begin to construct the common sections of your resume. Remember, most employers typically scan the resume quickly.

Summary of skills or highlight of qualifications

While this section is optional, it can be a good idea to present a summary of your selected skills and qualifications relevant to the position. Alternatively, you can use a heading such as, "Technical Skills," or "Laboratory Skills," given the requirements of the position. It is important to keep this section brief (three to four bullet points) and support each skill with an example of how you've obtained or demonstrated that skill. It is often presented as the first section on the resume.

Education

Depending on its importance to the position, this section can be placed at the beginning of or further along in the resume. Include dates, degree title, department, and name of institution. Your thesis title should only be included if relevant to the position.



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Relevant experience or work experience

In analyzing your CV, you may have chosen select experiences from sections such as Teaching Experience, Research Experience and Professional Experience, that are most relevant to the position. These can now be grouped under one single heading titled “Relevant Experience” on your resume. Or, you may choose to use several headings to group and highlight your experiences according to the needs of the position; e.g. “Project Management Experience”, “Leadership Experience”, “Writing Experience”, etc. For each experience listed, include dates, your title, institution or company name, and a description of your role. Describe each experience, beginning with action words like “managed project...”; “developed strong analytical skills through researching...” or “utilized effective presentation skills to deliver lectures...”

Additional experience

You may also have experiences from your academic administrative experience or other volunteer experience that offer additional relevant skills. These could be listed under “Additional Experience” or “Volunteer Experience” on your resume. Alternatively, you may have already grouped these under the “Relevant Experience” section mentioned above and, therefore, may not have a need for this section.

Selected publications and presentations

If relevant to the position, you may choose to include a brief selected list of your publications and presentations.

The other option would be to include them in the “Relevant Experience” section instead; e.g. when describing your thesis research experience, you may add a point such as, “published four papers in peer-reviewed journals...”

References

This is an optional section, typically placed at the end of the resume. It is sufficient to state “available upon request” unless the job posting is requesting a list of references.

Keep in mind that this is not a comprehensive list as you may create other sections, such as “Professional Development” or “Professional Membership/Associations”, that allow you to best present your relevant skills and experiences, while arranging them in an order that best targets the requirements of the job posting.

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